



June 26, 2020

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Chairman
Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member
Committee on Commerce,
Science and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Wicker and Ranking Member Cantwell:

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed significant vulnerabilities in the American manufacturing economy. As the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation begins to address important needs, we urge you to take a vital step to assess these vulnerabilities and to ensure that the nation is better prepared to respond to future economic threats.

We propose establishing, through the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Advanced Manufacturing National Program Office and the Manufacturing USA network, a Resilient Supply Chain Task Force. The goals of this Task Force would be to (1) identify critical vulnerabilities in existing U.S. supply chains, focusing particularly on those highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic; and (2) manage the mitigation of these vulnerabilities. With respect to this second goal, the Task Force would be responsible for developing road maps for three initiatives: (1) the formation of a National Manufacturing Guard, a reserve of industry volunteers trained and empowered to lead the Nation's economic crisis response efforts; (2) the construction of a Supply Chain Data Exchange to support the Manufacturing Guard by providing real-time, centralized information about inventory, capacity, resources, and bottlenecks on a national scale; and (3) the creation of a Technology Corps to serve as a workforce pipeline that prioritizes manufacturing skills determined by the Task Force and by Manufacturing Guard experts to be essential to U.S. economic security. We estimate the cost of this program to be \$5 million.

If we fail to learn from the current crisis, we remain vulnerable to the next one. Around the world, the countries that best weathered COVID-19 have been those who faced similar threats in the past—SARS, MERS, H1N1—and learned from the experience. The Supply Chain Task Force is an essential first step toward inoculating the nation's industrial pillars against the dangers of participation in the modern global economy.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER A. COONS
United States Senator

MARCO RUBIO
United States Senator

MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator

JOHN CORNYN
United States Senator